

Sara Ganim

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Sara Elizabeth Ganim (born September 9, 1987) is an American journalist, now a correspondent for CNN.^[3] Previously she was a reporter for *The Patriot-News*, a daily newspaper in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. There she broke the story that featured the Sandusky scandal and the Second Mile charity. For the Sandusky/Penn State coverage, "Sara Ganim and members of *The Patriot-News* Staff" won a number of national awards including the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting,^[1] making Ganim the third youngest winner of a Pulitzer.^[4] The award cited "courageously revealing and adeptly covering the explosive Sandusky sex scandal involving former football coach Jerry Sandusky."^[5]

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Early years

Born in Detroit,^[6] Ganim grew up in Coral Springs, Florida.^[7] In 2005, Ganim graduated from Archbishop McCarthy High School; she was a freelance reporter for the *Sun Sentinel* when in high school.^{[8][9]} She is a 2008 graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, where she majored in Journalism.^[10] Ganim is of Lebanese and German descent.^[11]

Career

Ganim began her career in high school as a contributor to the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* and later wrote for the *Daily Collegian* at Penn State before interning for *The Associated Press*.^[12] Ganim from 2007 worked for the *Centre Daily Times*, a daily newspaper based in State College, PA near the University Park campus of Penn State. At the *Daily Times* she generated her initial lead for the story of child abuse accusations against former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky and also won several State journalism awards.^{[13][14]} She joined *The Patriot-News* staff in January 2011. On March 31, 2011, *The Patriot-News* published Ganim's article reporting that a grand jury was investigating child sex abuse accusations against Sandusky.^[15] By November 2011, the grand jury indicted Sandusky, and the story became a major scandal for Penn State.

In November 2012, she left *The Patriot News* to become a full-time correspondent for CNN.^[3]

See also: *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill academics-athletics scandal*

On January 8, 2014, Ganim wrote a story for CNN claiming that some student-athletes at NCAA Division I member colleges and universities read at a third grade level or below.^[16] The article focused attention on several different schools, and included University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), attributing the UNC information to the findings of learning specialist, Mary Willingham, who worked at the university. UNC later issued a statement that this research was "severely flawed."^{[17][18]} The NCAA also disputed Ganim's portrayal of the academic qualifications of college athletes in the article, stating "the hard facts and cold truth simply do not bear out the scenario portrayed in [her] reporting."^[19] In response, Willingham said that her "data is 100% correct."^[20] On April 11, 2014, UNC released independent expert studies which reviewed the data and disputing Willingham's claims, concluding that "[a] recent CNN article stated, "60% [of UNC athletes] read between fourth- and eighth-grade levels. Between 8% and 10% read below a third-grade level." Rather than 60% of UNC student-athletes possessing a 4th to 8th grade reading level, only 6% of student-athletes read at such level."^[21] In May 2014, *New York Times* columnist cited the CNN report in telling the story of Willingham as a whistleblower.^[22] The coverage led UNC to ask for a seventh review of the scandal at UNC, led by former federal prosecutor Ken Wainstein, which found that UNC had downplayed an academic scandal there.^[23] However, the NCAA ultimately could not establish that UNC had committed any academic violations and UNC received no penalties.^[24]

Awards and recognition

For the Jerry Sandusky child sexual abuse case work, Ganim gained early attention as the scandal broadened. *MarketWatch* journalism columnist Jon Friedman wrote of her as "the star reporter" on the scandal in November, 2011. Friedman added that Kim Jones, reporting at Penn State for WFAN, "also mentioned Ganim's stellar work" and that Jason McIntyre of the sports blog *The Big Lead* among others had been singling out Ganim—and her *P-N* colleague Ben Jones, in McIntyre's case—on Twitter.^[25]

Considerable other attention and professional awards also were given. In February, 2012, Ganim became the youngest person ever, at age 24, to receive the Sidney Award for socially conscious journalism.^{[2][26]} In February 2012, Long Island University announced that she had won a prestigious George Polk Award in Journalism in 2011 for her coverage of the story.^{[27][28][29]} *Newsweek* magazine named her one of "150 Women Who Shake the

Sara Ganim



Ganim in 2012

Born	<div>Sara Elizabeth Ganim</div> <div>September 9, 1987 (age 30)^{[1][2]}</div> <div>Detroit, Michigan, USA</div>
Alma mater	Pennsylvania State University(2008)
Occupation	Journalist
Years active	2003–present
Employer	<div>CNN (2012–present)</div> <div><i>The Patriot-News</i> (2011–2012)</div> <div><i>Centre Daily Times</i> (2007–2010)</div>
Awards	<div>2011 George Polk Award in Journalism, December 2011 Sidney Award, 2012 Pulitzer Prize</div>

World" in March, 2012,^[30] and it was announced that Ganim and *The Patriot-News* would receive the **Scripps Howard**Award for Community Journalism, again for the Sandusky/Penn State coverage.^[31]

In April 2012, then-24-year-old Ganim became the third-youngest person (**Jackie Crosby** won at 22, **Stephanie Welsh** at 23) to win a Pulitzer Prize.^[4]

For her UNC coverage, Ganim won a 2015 Sigma Delta Chi award from the Society of Professional Journalists.^[32]

While a print journalist, she received recognition for a body of work that impacted the local communities she covered and for explanation journalism, including a Pennsylvania Bar Association Award, and several Pennsylvania state awards for multimedia reporting and storytelling.

In 2012, she was recognized by the Associated Press Managing Editors association for her work with student journalists.^[33] Ganim has taught college-level journalism and spends several days each year speaking to college and high school journalists about the profession of journalism and the transition from print to broadcast. In May 2015, she delivered the commencement address to graduates of the American University in Dubai.^[34]

Ganim holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Penn State University. In 2015, she was given the Philip Habib Award for Distinguished Public Service by the American Task Force for Lebanon.^[35]

In popular culture [edit]

In the HBO movie *Paterno*, Ganim, who was a consultant on the film,^[36] was played by Riley Keough.

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External links [edit]

- Sara Ganim on IMDb

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VTE	
Daily anchors	Amara WalkerBecky AndersonChristiane AmanpourKate BolduanMax FosterHala GoraniIsha SesayJohn VauseKristie Lu StoutMichael HolmesRiel
Fill-in and weekend anchors	Jonathan MannZain AsherFareed Zakaria
Sports	Don RiddellAlex ThomasAmanda DaviesKate RileyCoy WireHines Ward
Meteorologists	Pedram Javaheri
Correspondents	Maribel AberCristina AlesciDana BashJim BittermannPhil BlackGloria BorgerPamela BrownAna CabreraJean CasarezMatthew ChanceAnna Coren
Former personalities	Aneesh RamanAnjali RaoErrol BarnettBobbie BattistaAndrew BrownSharyl AttkissonHugh RimintonBernard ShawTerry BaddooRalph BegleiterJoi
VTE	
	Penn State child sex abuse scandal
Key figures	Jerry SanduskyMark EmmertMike McQuearyGraham SpanierJoe PaternoTim CurleyGary Schultz
Law enforcement/investigation	Ray GricarTom CorbettLinda L. KellyLouis Freeh
Organizations	The Second MilePennsylvania State UniversityPenn State Nittany Lions football <i>Joe Paterno</i> statue
Media	<i>The Patriot-News</i> / Sara Ganim <i>Touched: The Jerry Sandusky Story</i> <i>Game Over</i> <i>Paterno</i> (book) (Joe Posnanski) <i>Paterno</i> (film) <i>Silent No More</i> <i>Happ</i>

Categories: 1987 births | American newspaper reporters and correspondents | American people of Lebanese descent | CNN people | George Polk Award recipients | Living people | Pennsylvania State University alumni | People from Coral Springs, Florida | Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting winners | Writers from Detroit